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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Ferit Hoxha (Albania), on the basis of informal consultations

Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, in which key system-wide policy orientations are established for development cooperation at both the headquarters and the country levels,

Reaffirming the importance of the timely and full implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226,

Recalling the critical role of the Economic and Social Council in providing coordination, monitoring and guidance to the United Nations system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented on a system-wide basis in accordance with the present resolution and General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 50/227 of 24 May 1996, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, 61/16 of 20 November 2006 and 65/285 of 29 June 2011,

Management processes

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the monitoring of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and the analysis of funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2011;

2. *Acknowledges* the efforts of the Secretary-General in establishing an evidence-based monitoring system on the implementation of the quadrennial

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comprehensive policy review, and calls on the Secretary-General, in full consultation with the United Nations development system, to further enhance the analytical and evidence-based quality of the monitoring report as a tool for effective, coherent and accessible monitoring of the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, while minimizing transaction costs without affecting the quality of the report;

3. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes and strongly encourages the specialized agencies with operational activities for development to fully align their strategic plans with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, taking into account their respective mandates;

4. *Reaffirms* the importance of improving the transparency of the activities and responsiveness to Member States of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the United Nations Development Group, in accordance with paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 67/226, and in this regard takes note of the ongoing efforts of the United Nations development system to monitor the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including through the development of the United Nations Development Group Action Plan and Department of Economic and Social Affairs indicators, and requests the Secretary-General, in close consultation with all relevant entities, to prepare and implement a comprehensive, coherent and effective quadrennial comprehensive policy review monitoring and reporting framework;

5. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes to consolidate their current annual reporting on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review within their reporting on the implementation of their strategic plans, and to provide a thorough analysis, including through the selection and use of common indicators that are fully aligned with the monitoring framework for the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, to their executive boards and to the Council, with a view to ensuring its full implementation;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consolidate their annual reports on the implementation of the comprehensive policy review and the funding of United Nations operational activities for development in a single publication, with inputs from and in full consultation with all the funds, programmes and specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities, with a view to facilitating effective, efficient and high-quality analytical reporting on United Nations operational activities for development;

7. *Invites* the executive boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies to consider integrating evaluations of the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review into the evaluations of their strategic plans;

8. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes and strongly encourages those specialized agencies with operational activities for development to align their strategic planning and budgeting cycles with the comprehensive policy review cycle, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/232 and in paragraph 121 of its resolution 67/226, and to report regularly to their respective governing bodies on progress in and challenges to implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

9. *Emphasizes* the need for the Economic and Social Council to exercise its coordination and monitoring mandate and competencies to ensure the full and timely implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

Funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

10. *Reiterates* that core resources, because of their untied nature, continue to be the bedrock of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in this regard recognizes the need for organizations to address, on a continuous basis, the imbalance between core and non-core resources and to report to the Council in 2014, as part of their regular reporting, on the measures taken to address this imbalance;

11. *Urges* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to maintain and substantially increase their voluntary contributions, in a manner consistent with their capacities, to the core/regular budgets of the United Nations development system, in particular its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and to contribute on a multi-year basis, in a sustained and predictable manner;

12. While recognizing that non-core resources are not a substitute for core resources, *notes* that non-core resources represent an important contribution to the overall resource base of the United Nations development system and complement core resources in supporting operational activities for development, thus contributing to an increase in total resources; also notes the need for non-core resources to be more predictable, flexible, less earmarked and better aligned with the priorities of programme countries, including those in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and with the strategic plans and mandates of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies; and encourages those providing non-core contributions to prioritize pooled, thematic and joint-funding mechanisms at the global, regional and country levels, in full alignment with national development priorities;

13. *Reaffirms* the request of the General Assembly to the executive boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, as appropriate, to organize structured dialogues during 2014 on how to finance the development results agreed in the new strategic planning cycle of their respective entities;

14. *Reaffirms* the request stipulated in paragraph 42 of General Assembly resolution 67/226 that, as a practice, all available and projected financial contributions for operational activities for development of the United Nations system at the country level be consolidated within a common budgetary framework, which would not constitute a legal constraint on the spending authority of resources, and that the framework be used to strengthen the quality of system-wide resource planning in support of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, and in this regard requests the United Nations funds and programmes and strongly encourages the specialized agencies to provide information concerning efforts undertaken and results achieved towards that end as part of the regular reporting to the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

15. *Reaffirms* paragraph 39 of General Assembly resolution 67/226, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General, as part of the regular reporting, on the

basis of information to be provided by the United Nations development system entities, to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2014 on progress made on the development of the concept of critical mass of core resources;

16. *Reaffirms* that the guiding principle governing the financing of all non-programme costs should be based on a full-cost recovery proportionally from core and non-core funding sources, and in this regard notes the timelines agreed by the respective executive boards and the decision by the respective executive boards for an independent and external assessment to be performed in 2016 of the consistency and alignment of the new cost recovery methodology with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

Contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness

17. *Reaffirms* the request to the United Nations development system to develop, for the consideration of Member States, a common approach for measuring progress in capacity development, as well as to develop specific frameworks aimed at enabling programme countries, upon their request, to design, monitor and evaluate results in capacity development to achieve national development goals and strategies;

18. *Requests* the United Nations development system to consider the findings and observations related to national capacity gaps repeatedly highlighted by programme countries to be addressed through the work of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

Improved functioning of the United Nations development system

United Nations development assistance framework

19. *Requests* the United Nations development system at the country level to ensure alignment of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework period with the Government's planning cycle, wherever possible, as part of the overall efforts to fully align the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks with national priorities and needs;

Resident coordinator system

20. *Notes* the review of existing funding modalities in support of the resident coordinator system, and the resulting recommendations for improving the provision of resources and support to the resident coordinator system on the basis of a cost-sharing arrangement among all member entities of the United Nations Development Group, and in this regard requests the respective governing bodies to consider the recommendation for a cost-sharing arrangement and, subject to approval, to implement it in 2014, in order to ensure that the resident coordinators have the necessary stable and predictable resources to fulfil their mandates effectively, without compromising resources allocated to programmatic activities;

21. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes and strongly encourages the specialized agencies to further strengthen their participation in the resident coordinator system and the management and accountability system, including in the areas of information sharing, performance assessment and the "functional firewall";

22. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report, as part of the regular reporting, on steps taken to improve the overall effectiveness of the resident coordinator system, including in accordance with paragraphs 124 to 127 of General Assembly resolution 67/226;

"Delivering as one"

23. *Welcomes* the finalization of the standard operating procedures for countries wishing to adopt "Delivering as one", and in this regard requests the United Nations funds and programmes and strongly encourages the specialized agencies to fully and coherently implement the standard operating procedures by the end of 2013, and to report on progress towards that end to the first meeting of their respective governing bodies in 2014;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the United Nations system, to report on progress in the implementation of the standard operating procedures through the annual reporting on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

25. *Notes with concern* that options for the review and approval of common country programme documents of the "Delivering as one" countries, as requested in paragraph 143 of General Assembly resolution 67/226, were not presented to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2013, and requests the Secretary-General, in full consultation with the United Nations development system and countries using the common country programme document modality, to ensure that this matter is fully addressed at the substantive session of the Council in 2014;

26. *Reaffirms* the importance of the United Nations development system identifying and addressing challenges and bottlenecks at all levels that have prevented the United Nations country teams in "Delivering as one" countries from fully realizing efficiency gains under the "Delivering as one" approach, and requests the United Nations funds and programmes and encourages the specialized agencies to start reporting annually, as part of their regular reporting to the Council, on progress in this regard;

Simplification and harmonization of business practices

27. *Recognizes* that the harmonization of regulations and rules, policies and procedures of the funds and programmes in the functional areas of finance, human resources management, procurement, information technology management and administrative services, and the establishment of interoperability among existing enterprise resource planning systems of the funds and programmes, and the establishment of common services at the country level are interlinked and need to be pursued in an integrated manner;

28. *Recalls* paragraph 155 of General Assembly resolution 67/226, recognizes the progress made by the United Nations development system in harmonizing regulations and rules, policies and procedures and requests the Secretary-General, through the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, to continue the ongoing efforts at harmonizing regulations and rules, policies and procedures of the funds and programmes in the functional areas of finance, human resources management, procurement, information technology management and other appropriate services;

29. *Welcomes* the undertaking of a study to examine the feasibility of establishing interoperability among existing enterprise resource planning systems of the funds and programmes, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2014, as part of the regular reporting, on findings and assessment of progress in achieving full interoperability in 2016 in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

30. *Requests* the Secretary-General, consistent with paragraphs 152 and 155 of General Assembly resolution 67/226, to ensure adequate and evidenced-based planning and design of common United Nations service centres, by including in plans, for review by the Economic and Social Council in 2014, concrete proposals for pilot centres in consenting programme countries that duly represent the diversity of the United Nations presence in all the regions;

31. *Reaffirm* the request contained in paragraph 161 of General Assembly resolution 67/226, that the United Nations development system develop a strategy, by the end of 2013, to support the establishment of common premises in programme countries that wish to adopt them, requests the United Nations development system to commence the requested consultations in this regard with Member States, and requests the Secretary-General, through the United Nations development system, to report on progress made to the Council at its substantive session of 2014, as part of the regular reporting;

32. *Invites* the respective executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes, beginning in 2014, to review annually, including possibly through the informal mechanism of the joint meeting of the boards, progress on the simplification and harmonization of business practices, and to make available to the Council and the General Assembly the summary records of their deliberations;

Results-based management

33. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes and strongly encourages the specialized agencies to take further measures to ensure that the country programmes of individual entities, including common country programme documents or country programming frameworks, include complete results chains that are aligned with the respective outcomes agreed to in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and respective organization-wide results frameworks of each entity, in line with national needs and priorities;

34. *Reiterates* the request contained in paragraph 169 of General Assembly resolution 67/226 that the Secretary-General articulate and report to the Economic and Social Council at the operational activities segment of its substantive session in 2013, with a view to implementation by 2014, a more robust, coherent and harmonized approach to operational activities for development, focused on results, which would streamline and improve the planning, monitoring, measurement and reporting on system-wide results, and in this regard invites the executive boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities to engage in a focused dialogue on how to balance most effectively the need for reporting on system-wide results at all levels with the current agency-specific reporting requirements, taking into account the challenges in developing results frameworks that demonstrate the United Nations contribution to national development results;

Evaluation of operational activities

35. *Welcomes* the establishment of an interim coordination mechanism for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 67/226 and composed of the Joint Inspection Unit, the United Nations Evaluation Group, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and takes note of the new policy document for independent system-wide evaluation of United Nations operational activities for development, including the proposals for pilot system-wide evaluations, and calls for continuing consultations with Member States on the proposals for pilot system-wide evaluations, for decision by the end of 2013;

36. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as part of the regular reporting on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, to report on progress and challenges in implementing independent system-wide evaluations of United Nations operational activities for development.